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ABSTRACT

A survey of the 13 Indiana state depository libraries was conducted in 1989 to determine the state of the state documents in these libraries, which had not been done since 1969. Indiana passed a law in 1973 to establish the Indiana State Document Depository System. All except one responded to a questionnaire which covered access, maintenance, interlibrary loan, personnel, and acquisition. The study, which is intended to provide a starting point for further discussion, found that: (1) there is no uniform level of attention given to documents at the depository libraries; (2) some state agencies are not committed to the depository system and must be solicited directly for materials; (3) the number of documents sent to the state library has dropped from the originally mandated 50-75 to 25, which leaves no margin for claims or requests from non-depository libraries; and (4) depository libraries do very little to promote their state document collections. It was concluded that there is a desperate need for a patron study, responsibility for which clearly falls to the depository libraries. With the added voice of potential users, libraries would have increased leverage in building valuable state information centers. A copy of the questionnaire is appended. (KRN)

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Results of a Survey of

Indiana State Document Depositories

By Dave Obringer

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The goal of this article is to describe the state of state documents in Indiana depository libraries. This has not been done since Genevieve M. Casey and Edith Philips did it in 1969.[1] In 1973, Indiana passed Public Law 27 establishing the Indiana State Document Depository System. The law, codified by IC 4-23-7.1-23 et seq. and 590 IAC 1-3, draws minimal guidelines for state agencies and depository libraries. With this survey in hand, it is my hope that a more informed discussion of the effects of the 1973 law and the future of Indiana state documents may begin.

There are thirteen state depository libraries in Indiana. All except one responded to the survey. The depositories are spread equal distance throughout the state. On a quarterly basis, Indiana State Document Coordinator David Lewis, distributes "Checklist of Indiana State Documents." Along with this, the depository libraries receive state documents. Additionally, a checklist and two sets of documents goes to the Library of Congress and to the Center for Research Libraries. From this checklist, the Library of Congress includes Indiana state documents in the GPO Publication Monthly Checklist of State Publications.

State agencies participating in the depository program send twenty five copies to the state library. After distributing a copy to each library and two to both LC and CRL, there are few, if any, documents left for claims or distribution to non-depository libraries.

The survey was divided into five sections: access, collection maintenance, interlibrary loan, personnel and acquisitions. There is unevenness in the number of responses per question because not all questions pertained to all libraries. For example, the state library could not answer several questions under acquisitions.

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[1]Genevieve M. Casey and Edith Phillips, Indiana Library Studies, report number 17, Bloomington, IN 1970 pp 1-63.

ACCESS

The first set of questions were meant to identify how libraries are presenting the state documents to their patrons. This set of questions was concerned with matters such as: where are the documents? are they clearly identified as state documents? are user guides or other access tools available?

One hinderance to access is that there is no published index of Indiana State Documents. Several respondents relied on the "Checklist" as a method of access. Six libraries have a catalog for state documents and another five have a partial catalog. In some cases pamphlet size documents were organized in file cabinets with appropriate subject headings printed on the folders.

Seven of the libraries did not publicize their depository status in any way. No one took advantage of public service ads available on radio, local newspapers or student papers. Signs and handouts were used by only a few libraries.

MAINTENANCE

The law regarding state documents is ambiguous. One provision requires that documents be kept five years. Beyond that, libraries may treat their collection as they see fit. All but one library has designed an organization scheme. Half of the libraries include the documents in a shelf list, either separate or integrated. There are, however, four libraries that have no shelf list of their Indiana Documents.

Despite the extra processing required by a unique document organization scheme, most of the libraries are able to get the items on the shelf within twenty days. Only two libraries took more than thirty days. One library reported that the serials took much less time than monographs and thus that library gave two responses. This accounts for the thirteen responses instead of twelve on question fourteen.

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The growth rate of the collection is mostly a result of state agencies providing the materials. Four libraries reported growth of less than one shelf per year. Five reported that the collection grew between one and five shelves per year. Variations can be explained in part by aggressive acquisition practices in some libraries.

Even though a library can expect minimal demands on shelf space, there is a clear preference for medium to large libraries. No state depository reported holdings of less than 100,000. Seven of the twelve respondents reported more than 500,000.

Of all the questions, the one that begs most for future study is the patron survey question. No one has tried to define just what Indiana citizens need in terms of state documents.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

In a sense, state documents are like rare books. There are only a small number printed and distribution is geographically limited. They are difficult, if not impossible to replace and will probably never be reprinted. For these reasons, a library could easily justify a restrictive loan policy. The law, however, requires that libraries make these documents available through interlibrary loan. Nine of the twelve depositories responding to this survey complied with this. With the sparsity of indexes citing state documents, it is unlikely that there is much demand.

PERSONNEL

This brief section of questions yielded no surprises. All libraries have one person designated as responsible for the collection. All but one had a librarian in charge of the collection. Most libraries also had at least one assistant.

There is a vagueness to this set of questions. In Indiana a librarian

could be a librarian I with an MLS and experience or a Librarian V with two years of college and nine credits of library science. Thus the questions were not as precise as they should have been.

ACQUISITION

Perhaps the area that shows most clearly that state agencies are not cooperating with PL 27 is acquisitions. In this it is apparent that half or more of the libraries are requesting documents directly from the issuing agency and, at times, paying for them. If the document is available by request, then it must be a public document, which makes it a mandated depository item.

CONCLUSIONS

Indiana's state depository libraries have varied approaches to dealing with their documents. Guidelines for the depositories are minimal and result in various levels of attention given to the documents. One step that would increase statewide uniformity in collection organization would be to assign a state document number to each item before distributing them. This would also reduce processing time. There are obvious disadvantages to this as well. Retrospective conversion of large collections and state documents integrated in the general collection pose a considerable challenge.

Clearly some state agencies are less than committed to the depository system. This is evidenced by the slow rate of growth of document collections and the necessity of direct solicitation of state agencies.

Although the law originally called for fifty to seventy five copies be sent to the state library, this has been relaxed de facto to twenty five. This leaves no margin of excess for claims or requests from non-depository libraries. Additional copies might open the possibility of smaller libraries having selective state document depositories. Having depository libraries equal distance apart ensures reasonable access throughout the state, but there

is no reason to limit the depository system to thirteen.

It is not enough, however, to point accusingly at state agencies for failing to adhere to state depository laws. Depository libraries also need to shoulder some responsibility in promoting its state documents. The information contained in these documents is valuable to the citizens of Indiana. But sometimes the information is concealed by silent stacks, unmarked file cabinets and incomplete finding aids.

Foremost, however, there is a desperate need for a patron study. Responsibility for this clearly falls to the libraries. To pressure state agencies who are not fulfilling their depository obligations, librarians must convince them that this is important to Indiana voters. This is the next logical step in building a strong depository system. With the added voice of a wanting citizenry, libraries would have increased leverage in building valuable state information centers.

This study has looked at one part of the state document depository system. It is, I believe, a starting point for examining the larger entity. There are a number of issues that need to be taken up, shortcomings of the depository law, the distribution system, the number of depositories and more.[2] The state document depository libraries would have a stronger position in presenting proposals on these issues if they had first did the best job possible on the collections they had.

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[2] For more suggestions of problems, see Byron Swanson , "Indiana State Documents: A History and a Critique," Indiana Libraries (1986):6(1) pp 27-31.

SURVEY OF INDIANA STATE DOCUMENT DEPOSITORIES

Please circle the letter of the best answer.

ACCESS

1) Are your Indiana State Documents
   1) shelved in an identifiably unique area----------5
   2) completely integrated with the general collection--2
   3) mostly integrated with general collection----------2
   4) some are integrated with general collection--------3

2) The documents
   a) are included in the card catalog or online catalog-1
   b) have a separate listing or catalog----------5
   c) are partially cataloged or listed----------5
   d) are not cataloged or listed----------1

3) Approximatately what percentage are used as part of the reference collection?
   a) 0%----------0
   b) up to 10%----------9
   c) 10-25%----------2
   d) 25-50%----------1
   e) more than 50%----------0

4) Is the library's status as an Indiana State Depository publicized
   a) by signs----------2
   b) public service ads (any media)----------0
   c) handouts----------3
   d) not publicized----------7
   e) other (please describe) - Two listed bibliographic instruction.

5) Does the library have a guide to the access or use of Indiana State Documents?
   a) yes----------4
   b) no----------8

6) Does the library have commercial indexes for the collection?
   a) yes----------0
   b) no----------12

7) What access tools are used? (i.e. indexes, bibliographies, etc.)
   _____
   _____
   _____

8) What is the circulation policy?
   a) in library use only----------2
   b) same as books----------9
   c) other (please describe)----------1

9) Are the documents available all hours the library is open?
   a) yes----------10
   b) no----------2

   If "no" then, documents are
   a) Available _____ hours less than rest of library
   b) Available _____ hours more than rest of library

10) Is the collection accessible to wheelchair patrons?
a) yes----------11
b) no----------1

MAINTENANCE

11) Do the items have Dewey or Library of Congress call numbers?
a) yes, Dewey----------5
b) yes, LC----------0
c) no----------7

12) Is another organization scheme in place?
a) yes----------11
b) no----------1

if yes, give brief description:

_____
_____
_____
_____

13) Does the library maintain a separate shelf list for Indiana State Documents?
a) yes----------6
b) no----------6

If "no", then
a) state documents are included in the general shelf list-2
b) no shelf list is maintained for state documents--------4

14) How long does it take to put the document on the shelf from the time it is received?
a) Less than ten days----------7
b) Ten to twenty days----------3
c) Twenty to thirty days----------1
d) More than thirty days----------2

What causes the most delay?

_____
_____
_____

15) Indiana State documents are kept
a) indefinitely----------4
b) varies to item----------3
c) at least five years----------4
d) all five years----------1
e) no policy----------0

16) How much shelf space is currently used to hold Indiana State Documents?
a) less than ten shelves----------0
b) 10-15 shelves----------1
c) 16-25 shelves----------1
d) 25-50 shelves----------2
e) 51-100 shelves----------0
f) more than 100----------4

17) What is the growth rate of the collection?
a) less than 1 shelf per year----------4
b) 1-5 shelves per year----------5
c) 5-10 shelves per year----------1
d) 10-15 shelves per year----------0
e) more than 15 shelves per year----------0

18) Does your library bind Indiana State Documents?
a) yes----------4
b) no----------8

19) How much is spent each year for binding?
a) 0----------5
b) up to $25----------0
c) $25-$50----------1
d) $50-$100----------1
e) $100-$200----------1
f) more than $200----------1

20) Does your library stamp a date on Indiana State Documents when they arrive?
a) yes----------10
b) no----------2

21) Does your library identify each depository item with an Indiana State Documents stamp or other mark?
a) yes----------11
b) no----------1

22) How many volumes does your library have other than Indiana State Documents?
a) Less than 10,000----------0
b) 10-25,000----------0
c) 25-50,000----------0
d) 50-100,000----------0
e) 100-250,000----------4
f) 250-500,000----------1
g) More than 500,000----------7

23) Do you measure usage of Indiana State Documents?
a) yes----------2
b) no----------10

24) Do you measure usage of other parts of the library's collection?
a) yes----------8
b) no----------3

25) Has your library done a needs assessment survey for state documents?
a) yes----------0
b) no----------12

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

26) Are the documents available on ILL?
a) yes----------6
b) no----------3
c) yes, with restrictions----------3
If "c" please describe _____
_____

27) Do you receive ILL requests from out of state libraries?
a) yes----------7
b) no----------5

28) Would you loan a state document to an out of state library?
a) yes----------10
b) no----------2

PERSONNEL

29) Is one person designated as being responsible for the collection?
a) yes----------12
b) no----------0

30) If yes to above, is the person
a) a staff person----------1
b) a librarian----------11

31) How many staff (not including the person designated as in charge) are assigned to assist in maintaining the collection?
a) none----------4
b) one, who has other duties as well----------7
c) one full time----------0
d) two----------2
e) more than two----------0

ACQUISITION

32) Do you actively solicit state agencies directly?
a) yes----------3
b) no----------2
c) only on occasion----------7

33) Does your library submit claims for items that according to the "Checklist" should have been included in your shipment, but were not?
a) Yes----------2
b) No----------4
c) Sometimes----------4

34) Claiming an item from the state library is successful?
a) Always----------0
b) Usually----------3
c) About half the time----------3
d) Usually not----------0
e) Not successful----------0

35) How much of what is received comes from sources other than the state library?
a) 0%----------3
b) up to 10%----------5
c) 10-25%----------0
d) 25-50%----------1
e) more than 50%----------0

36) How much is spent purchasing Indiana State Documents each year?

a) 0----------4
b) up to $25----------0
c) $25-$50----------2
d) $50-$100----------1
e) $100-$200----------1
f) $200-$500----------1
g) more than $500----------0